

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 CIEP-01 STR-04

TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 /085 W

----- 123947

R 011707Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0741

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EGEN, UK, EEC

SUBJECT: EC MEMBERSHIP: LABOR ANTI-MARKET PUTSCH FAILS

REF: LONDON 6350

SUMMARY: ANTICIPATED EFFORT BY LABOR PARTY'S ANTI-MAR-
KETEERS TO FORCE TRANSPORT HOUSE (LABOR PARTY'S CENTRAL
HEADQUARTERS), TO ASSUME MAJOR ROLE IN REFERENDUM CAM-
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PAIGN FAILED TO MATERIALIZE, LARGELY DUE TO AGGRESSIVE

OPPOSITION OF PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY RON HAYWARD. LABOR BACKBENCHERS, GOVERNMENT MINISTERS (SOME OF THEM ANTI-EC) AND TRANSPORT HOUSE STAFF ALSO REGISTERED THEIR SUPPORT FOR LABOR'S AGREEMENT TO DISAGREE AND THEIR OPPOSITION TO ASSUMPTION OF ACTIVE ROLE BY PARTY ORGANIZATION IN REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN. AS A RESULT, APRIL 30 SPECIAL MEETING OF LABOR'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) WAS ANTI-CLIMAX. IN UNRELATED DEVELOPMENT, MAY 1 PRESS REPORTS THAT LEAK OF THREE REFERENDUM DOCUMENTS -- POPULAR VERSION OF GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER AND STATEMENTS OF PRO- AND ANTI-MARKET GROUPS -- FORCED HMG TO RELEASE TEXT OF THESE DOCUMENTS EARLIER THAN HAD BEEN PLANNED. PRESS ALSO REPORTS GOVERNMENT HAS LAUNCHED INQUIRY INTO LEAK. END SUMMARY.

1. EFFORTS OF LEFT-WING LABOR ANTI-MARKETEERS, LED BY INDUSTRY SECRETARY TONY BENN AND IAN MIKARDO TO FORCE LABOR PARTY ORGANIZATION TO CONDUCT ACTIVE ANTI-EC CAMPAIGN (REFTEL) CAME TO NAUGHT APRIL 30. THEIR INITIATIVE SPARKED STRONG REACTION FROM VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF LABOR PARTY, BOTH PRO- AND ANTI-MARKET. TRANSPORT HOUSE EMPLOYEES, BY OVERWHELMING VOTE, ENDORSED WRITTEN APPEAL TO NEC TO ABIDE BY SPECIAL PARTY CONFERENCE DECISION (RESOLUTION AND HAYWARD MEMORANDUM) WHICH PERMITS DISAGREEMENT ON EC ISSUE AND PRECLUDES ACTIVE PARTY ROLE IN ANTI-EC CAMPAIGN. THIS SENTIMENT WAS ECHOED IN A LETTER FROM FCO MINISTER DAVID ENNALS (A CONVERT TO PRO-MARKET CAUSE), A STATEMENT BY 50 JUNIOR MINISTERS (INCLUDING BOTH PRO- AND ANTI-MARKETEERS), AND A RESOLUTION FROM LABOR PARTY AGENTS.

2. PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY RON HAYWARD, ACCORDING TO PRESS, WAS FORCEFUL ADVOCATE OF NON-ENGAGED POSITION AT APRIL 30 NEC MEETING CALLED BY ANTI-EC FORCES. HAYWARD REPORTEDLY REVIEWED VARIOUS NEC AND CONFERENCE DECISIONS WHICH SUPPORTED "AGREEMENT TO DIFFER" THESIS, STRESSED THAT ANY ACTION TO FORCE PARTY ORGANIZATION TO CAMPAIGN ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ISSUE WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DIVISIVE AND NOTED THAT IN ANY EVENT PARTY WAS IN VERY POOR FINANCIAL CONDITION. PRESS REPORTS THAT MIKARDO, IN THE SPIRIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF UNITY, MOVED THAT NEC ACCEPT HAYWARD'S REPORT. HIS
MOTION WAS SECONDED BY PRICES SECRETARY SHIRLEY WILLIAMS
AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. INDUSTRY SECRETARY BENN, THE
OTHER PRIME MOVER IN THE ABORTIVE EFFORT, REPORTEDLY SAT
QUIETLY THROUGHOUT THE DELIBERATIONS. THE SESSION LASTED
ONLY 28 MINUTES, PURPORTEDLY THE SHORTEST NEC MEETING ON
RECORD.

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3. UPSHOT IS THAT TRANSPORT HOUSE WILL CONTINUE TO DIS-
TRIBUTE STATEMENTS OF GOVERNMENT MINISTERS AND LABOR MPS
ON BOTH SIDES OF ISSUE. IT WILL, HOWEVER, PRODUCE ANTI-
EC PAMPHLETS, POSTERS AND STICKERS WHICH WILL BE AVAIL-
ABLE FOR SALE TO LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AT COST PRICE.
IT WILL NOT STAGE RALLIES OR OTHERWISE ENGAGE IN REFEREN-
DUM CAMPAIGN, ALTHOUGH LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATIONS ARE FREE
TO CAMPAIGN AS THEY SEE FIT.

4. MAY 1 PRESS REPORTED THAT THE SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF
GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER ENDORSING CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP
AND THE OFFICIAL PRO- AND ANTI-EC STATEMENTS, ALL OF
WHICH ARE TO BE MAILED TO REGISTERED VOTERS, HAD BEEN
PREMATURELY LEAKED, FORCING GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE THESE
DOCUMENTS (TEXTS TO BE POUCHED). THE PRO- AND ANTI-EC
STATEMENTS WERE PREPARED BY THE RESPECTIVE UMBRELLA ORGA-
NIZATIONS AND PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE. EARLY RE-
LEASE OF THESE DOCUMENTS HAS THROWN A SPANNER IN LAUNCH-
ING CEREMONIES PLANNED BY THE RESPECTIVE UMBRELLA GROUPS,
AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS ORDERED AN OFFICIAL INQUIRY.

5. COMMENT. TRANSPORT HOUSE SOURCE CONFIRMS GENERAL AC-
CURACY OF PRESS ACCOUNTS OF NEC MEETING, BUT SUGGESTED
PRESS HAD OVERDRAMATIZED THE ENTIRE AFFAIR. SOURCE, HOW-
EVER, AGREED THAT GENERAL SECRETARY HAYWARD, TOGETHER WITH
CHAIRMAN FRED MULLEY, WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN ASSURING LEAST
DIVISIVE OUTCOME. IT SEEMS TO US, HOWEVER, THAT NEC MEET-
ING WAS SOMETHING OF A SETBACK FOR BENN AND MIKARDO WHO
EVIDENTLY DID NOT ANTICIPATE VIGOR OF REACTION FROM VAR-
IOUS SECTIONS OF LABOR PARTY. LEAK OF OFFICIAL REFEREN-
DUM STATEMENTS, WHILE EMBARRASSING TO GOVERNMENT, IS NOT
ESPECIALLY SIGNIFICANT. HOWEVER, IT WILL NO DOUBT FUEL
THE ANTI-MARKETEERS' GROWING CONVICTION THAT GOVERNMENT IS
NOT PLAYING FAIR IN REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN. RICHARDSON

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